

Remarks

Claims 1-12, 14-15, and 31-44 are pending for the Examiner's consideration, including further amended claims 1, 31, 37, and 43. Claims 13 and 16-30 previously were canceled, and claim 15 has been withdrawn from consideration. No new matter is believed to have been added by the claim amendments presented herein.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended by Examiner Ward during an interview on October 15, 2007.

The amendments to claims 1, 31, 37 and 43 are supported, for example, in an exemplary embodiment in FIGS. 8 and 9 as well as at page 11, line 7 to page 12, line 30 of the specification.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In the Office Action, claims 31-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,384,002 to Leatherman *et al.* ("Leatherman").

Independent claim 31, as amended, recites a method comprising, *inter alia*, guiding the first free end between spaced first and second guides configured to contact and guide the first layer along a guide surface, and simultaneously moving the second layer to contact the first guide, with the first guide comprising a heated body, so that a first edge portion of the first layer bends and abuts a second edge portion of the second layer, wherein the guiding occurs so that prior to abutting each other the first edge portion of the first layer and the second edge portion of the second layer directly contact the heated body.

Independent claim 37, as amended, recites a method comprising, *inter alia*, guiding the first free end between spaced first and second guides configured to contact and guide the first layer along a guide surface, and simultaneously moving the second layer to contact the first guide, with the first guide comprising a heated body, so that a first surface portion of the first layer bends and abuts a second surface portion of the second layer, wherein the guiding occurs so that prior to the first and second surface portions abutting one another, the first and second surface portions directly contact the heated body.

As understood, Leatherman fails to disclose the recited guiding with guides as claimed in claims 31 and 37.

Claims 31-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by “the Admitted Prior Art in the specification of the present application, which incorporates US 5658644 to Ho et al. by reference.”

As understood, “the Admitted Prior Art” and Ho also fails to disclose the recited guiding with guides as claimed in independent claims 31 and 37.

Claims 37-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 0 332 602 to Wouters (“Wouters”). The rejection respectfully is overcome.

As understood, Wouters fails to disclose the recited guiding with guides as claimed in claim 37.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-12, 14, and 31-36 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wouters in view of JP 5-177752 to Kato (“Kato”). Separately, claims 1-12, 14, and 31-42 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wouters in view of Kato.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites a method comprising, *inter alia*, rolling at least the first layer between spaced first and second guides configured to contact the first layer and guide the first layer along a heated guide surface toward the second layer, contacting the first layer with the second layer, and simultaneously moving the second layer to contact the first guide.

As understood, the combination of Wouters and Kato fails to disclose or suggest the method recited in independent claim 1 with the recited rolling with guides or the method recited in independent claim 31 with the recited guiding with guides.

Claims 1-12, 14, and 31-42 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,037,033 to Hunter (“Hunter”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,985,106 to Nelson (“Nelson”).

As understood, Hunter does not teach or suggest rolling as recited in independent claim 1 or guiding as recited in amended independent claims 31 and 37. Nelson discloses use of a “roller arrangement” but is not understood to teach or suggest use of the guides recited in these amended independent claims.

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 14, 31-34, 36-40, and 42 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,630,806 to Kitajima *et al.* (“Kitajima”) in view of the collective teachings of U.S. Patent No. 3,579,396 to Washburn *et al.* (“Washburn”), U.S. Patent No. 3,616,077 to Jessee *et al.* (“Jessee”), U.S. Patent No. 3,031,356 to Bousquet *et al.* (“Bousquet”), and U.S. Patent No. 4,606,784 to Glans *et al.* (“Glans”) (collectively, “the Combination”).

Independent claims 1, 31, and 37 have been amended as discussed above.

As understood, the Combination fails to disclose or suggest the method recited in independent claim 1 with the recited rolling with guides or the methods recited in independent claims 31 and 37 with the recited guiding with guides.

Finally, in the Office Action, claims 6, 10-11, 35, and 41 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitajima in view of the collective teachings of Washburn, Jessee, Bousquet, Glans, U.S. Patent No. 3,785,908 to Wagers *et al.*, and U.S. Patent No. 5,545,279 to Hall *et al.* Also, claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitajima in view of the collective teachings of Washburn, Jessee, Bousquet, Glans, and U.S. Patent No. 5,246,516 to Rias. It is submitted that dependent claims 6, 10-12, 35, and 41 at least are patentable not only because of the patentability of the independent claim from which they depend, but also for the totality of features recited respectively therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all the pending claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. If the Examiner does not agree, then a personal or telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues so as to expedite the eventual allowance of the claims.

No fees are believed to be due for this submission. Should any fees be required, however, please charge all required fees to Steptoe & Johnson LLP Deposit Account No. 19-4293.

Date: October 23, 2007

Respectfully Submitted,



For:

Seth A. Watkins Reg. No. 47,169
Charles F. Schill Reg. No. 27,590
STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP
1330 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036-1795
(202) 429-3000